

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. Claims 1-9 were previously pending in this application. Claims 1 and 6 have been amended. New claims 10-20 have been added. As a result, claims 1-20 are pending for examination with claims 1, 6, 10 and 16 being independent claims. No new matter has been added.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2-4.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being unpatentable for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1 and 6 have amended to overcome this rejection. These amendments are for clarification only and do not narrow the scope of the claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1 and 5-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Gowda et al. (U.S. 5,898,168). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Gowda is directed to an image sensor pixel circuit. FIG. 3b illustrates an image cell that includes a photodiode 26. A transistor 22 allows current to flow through the photodiode 26 when the transistor 22 is on. The transistor 22 is turned on and off by a Row Select signal. As shown in FIG. 5, the Row Select signal changes from a low signal to a high signal and vice versa. The change of the signal is illustrated in FIG. 5 as a linear segment between the two levels. This linear representation is merely a drawing convention that simplifies illustrating a change in the level of a signal. Gowda does not discuss how the signal varies between the two levels.

By contrast, claim 1, as amended, recites, *inter alia*, providing a transition control signal having a predefined average slope between the second level and the first level. Gowda does not teach or suggest a transition control signal having a predefined average slope. Therefore, claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Gowda.

Claims 2-5 depend from claim 1 and are therefore patentable for at least the same reasons.

Claims 6 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Nomoto et al. (U.S. 5,818,526). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Nomoto is directed to a solid state image pickup device that includes an array of rows and columns of pixels. Applicants do not agree that a photodiode is inherent to a pixel and a read node is inherent to the device, as the Office Action contends. Applicants reserve the right to raise this issue at a later date, if necessary.

The image pickup device includes a horizontal scanning circuit and a vertical scanning circuit (FIG. 1). The device includes horizontal pixel select lines G (col. 4, lines 66-67) and a clock signal Li. FIG. 8 illustrates a clock signal Li and other signals that change from one level to another level. The changes of the signals are illustrated in FIG. 8 as being instantaneous.

By contrast, claim 6, as amended, recites, *inter alia*, a control signal transition of predefined average slope. Nomoto does not teach or suggest a control signal transition of predefined average slope. Therefore, claim 6 patentably distinguishes over Nomoto.

Claims 7-9 depend from claim 6 and are therefore patentable for at least the same reasons.

Accordingly, withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

New independent claim 10 is directed to a control circuit for a circuit comprising photosensitive component. The control circuit includes a first switch having a control terminal. The control circuit also includes a circuit that provides a signal to the control terminal, the signal having a controlled transition from a first voltage level to a second voltage level. Claim 10 patentably distinguishes over Nomoto and Gowda because neither Nomoto or Gowda teach or suggest a signal having a controlled transition from a first voltage level to a second voltage level.

New independent claim 16 is directed to a method of controlling a circuit that comprises a photosensitive component and a switch. The method includes providing a signal having a first voltage level to a control terminal of the switch. The method also includes providing a signal

having a second voltage level to a control terminal of the switch. The method further includes providing, to the control terminal of the switch, a signal having a transition from the first voltage level to the second voltage level, a duration of the transition being controlled. Claim 16 patentably distinguishes over Nomoto and Gowda because neither Nomoto or Gowda teach or suggest a transition from the first voltage level to the second voltage level, a duration of the transition being controlled.

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CONCLUSION

A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at the telephone number listed below if this communication does not place the case in condition for allowance.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825.

Respectfully submitted,
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